

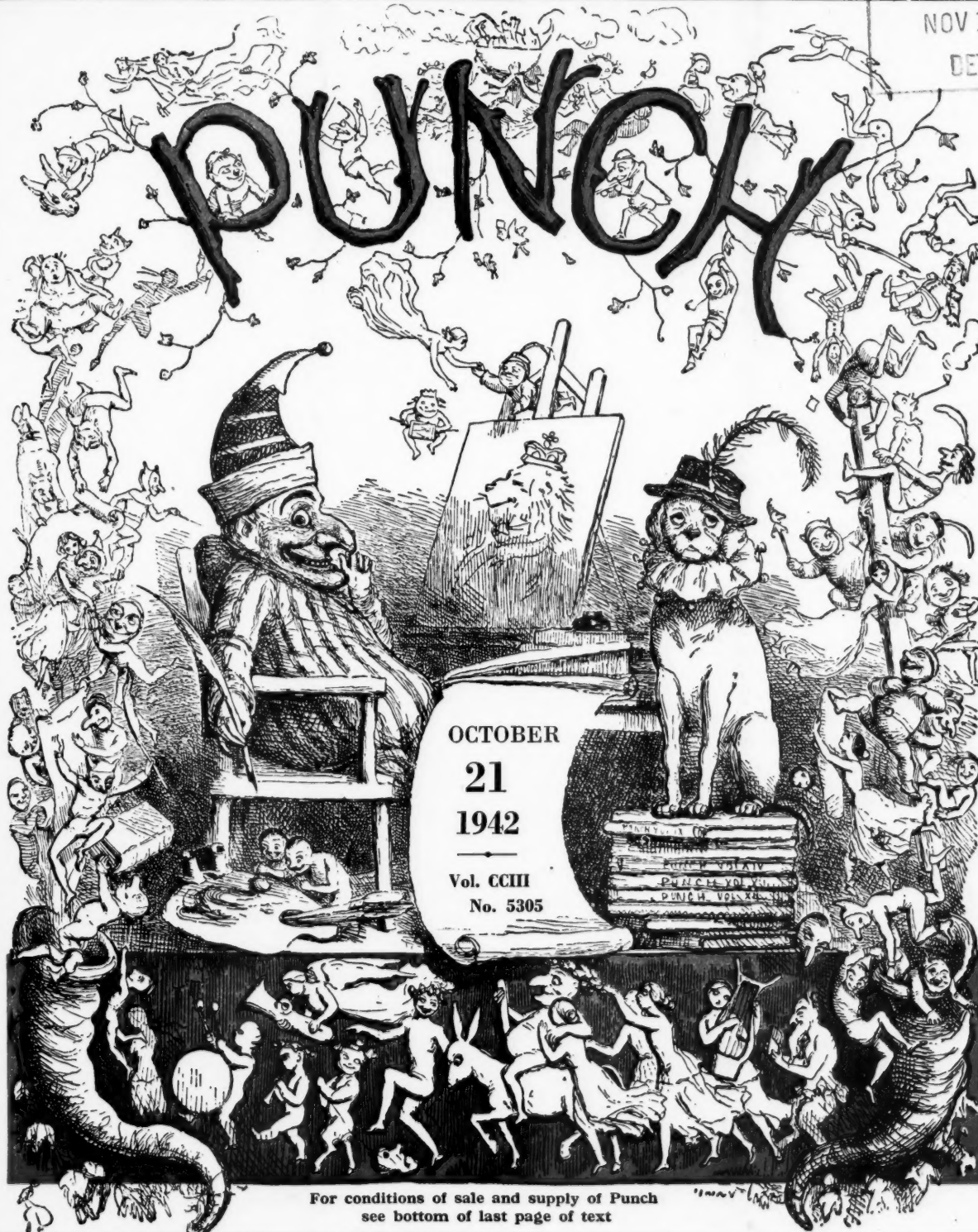
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— as British as the Flag

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OCTOBER
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Vol. CCIII
No. 5305

For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
see bottom of last page of text

"Triplex"— the safety glass

Regd.



Bringing Home the Vitamins

A HAPPY and contented child . . . with rosy cheeks and sturdy limbs . . . making steady headway . . . that's what every mother longs to see. Such well-being calls for loving care, particularly during the winter months.

Remember that children, of all ages, need a supply of vitamins to build up a robust constitution and to safeguard them against winter ills. For this purpose 'Vimaltol' is an ideal supplement to the daily dietary.

'Vimaltol' is a delicious preparation of the highest quality which provides, in scientifically balanced form, the important vitamins required to build up strength and weight and to fortify resistance. Its delicious taste is irresistible to children—it is just as nice as the most delicious jam.

Owing to its high concentration, 'Vimaltol' is very economical in use. Make sure that your children have it every day.



In two sizes: 2/10d. & 5/2d.

VIII

MECCANO

AND

HORNBY TRAINS

THE WORLD'S GREATEST TOYS

We regret that we cannot supply these famous toys to-day, but they will be ready for you again after the war. In the meantime, if you are in any difficulties with your toys, write to

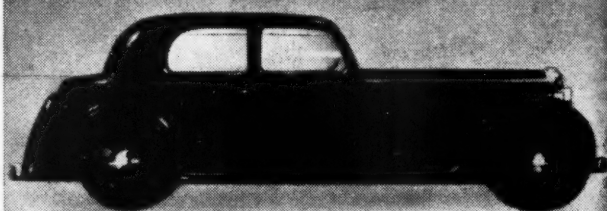
MECCANO LTD., BINNS ROAD, LIVERPOOL 13



ROVER

"One of Britain's Fine Cars"

The manufacture of Rover Cars has been entirely suspended, but our valuable technical experience will be reflected in the cars which will again be produced as soon as circumstances permit. The high quality which has always rightly been associated with Rover Cars has resulted in owners' appreciation of the excellent service they are obtaining under the present strenuous conditions, particularly in regard to reliability, performance, and minimum of maintenance.



THE ROVER COMPANY LTD. COVENTRY AND LONDON

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X marks the Victim!

Do you realise that one out of every seven of the people you see around you is liable, one day, to become a victim of cancer? Do you know that every year over 70,000 people die as a result of this dread disease? At The Royal Cancer Hospital is a group of workers who do not consider that such things are inevitable. While relieving the suffering of the already afflicted, they are constantly striving to reduce this terrible annual toll. But without your help they cannot continue. Please help them by sending a gift.

**The Royal
Cancer
Hospital**

FULHAM RD., LONDON, S.W.3



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your district.

OVER 400 SIMPSON AGENTS & SIMPSON 202 PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1.

Many an officer—airborne, ashore or afloat—is grateful to Simpson's long tradition of tailoring craftsmanship. For a Simpson uniform is not only comfortable to the body—it is comforting to the mind! You know that every detail is "Ship-shape and correct." Almost wherever you are stationed in Great Britain you will find one of Simpson's 400 agents at hand. For efficient uniform service, swift delivery, full equipment and sound solid value, the pass-word is Simpson.

Go easy with Brylcreem

Brylcreem is scarce and not always easy to buy just when you may want it. So make each jar, when you get it, last a long time. A very few drops of Brylcreem, rubbed well into your hair roots every few days, and a few seconds finger tip massage of your scalp night and morning every day, will keep your scalp loose and healthy, free from scurf and dandruff.

BRYLCREEM
THE PERFECT HAIR DRESSING

royds 789

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coming...

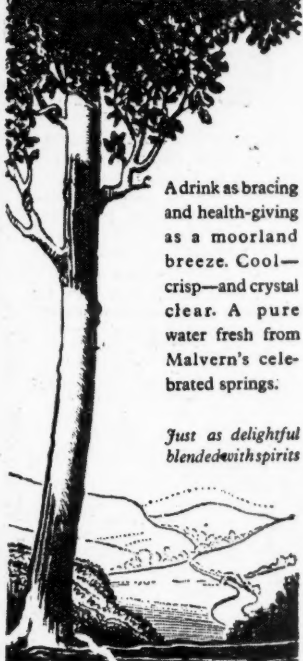


We regret that meantime, diminishing stocks make it impossible for us to supply more than a modest fraction of the demand for Celesta Sherry and Concord Port. For all supplies, the public should go through their usual retail channels; we are not able to supply direct.

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CELESTA 13/6
SHERRY and
12/6 CONCORD
PORT

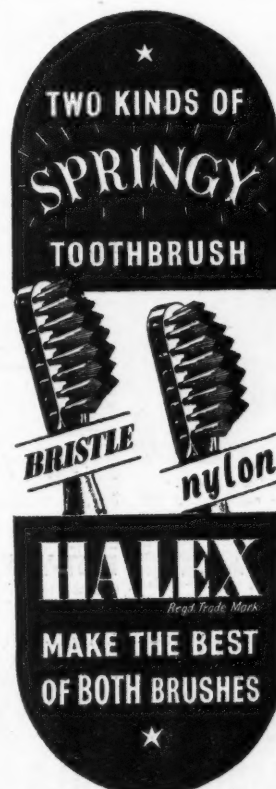
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LONDON GLASGOW

Schwepes
MALVERN SPA



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Just as delightful
blended with spirits



★ With bristles (from 1/- plus tax) or with nylon instead of bristles (from 1/6 plus tax). Six different coloured handles.

MANY DIFFERENT
UNIFORMS



BUT
STILL
THE
ONE
COLLAR

Never was man's dress so varied as in these war-time days of uniforms, but men still choose 'Van Heusen'. In 'Civvie Street', too, men spend their coupons on 'Van Heusen' Collars which won their popularity by their good looks, comfort and long life.

**"VAN
HEUSEN"**

Regd. Trade Mark

SEMI-STIFF COLLARS

Sole Manufacturers: Harding, Tilton & Hartley, Ltd., Taunton, Somerset

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YOUR
RADIO**

FREE
SERVICE
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FREE
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FREE
REPLACEMENTS
(including valves)



OUR POLICY

The maintenance of Subscribers' sets has always been Radio Rentals' first consideration. Owing to restricted supplies we greatly regret that adherence to this policy to-day renders it impossible for us to accept new Subscribers at many of our Branches. All the same you may be in an area where we can install a set—certain Branches had sets available at the time of going to press. So please enquire at our Local Branch (see local Tel. Directory) or address below.

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(The World's Largest Radio Renting Organisation)

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Radio Rentals gave unrivalled Service and provided thousands of listeners with first-class radio reception on the most economical terms obtainable.

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Radio Rentals have added 50,000 new Subscribers to their Service all of whom are saving money (they are only paying 1939 pre-tax rentals), enjoying carefree reception and obtaining all replacements free of charge.

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On the return of our 200 technical men from the Fighting Forces, Radio Rentals Service will eclipse all past records and include RADIOGRAMS, TELEVISION and CAR RADIO on amazingly low rentals.

I say—
"Meatless dishes" need
**Yorkshire
Relish**



Coming Sir!
THIN or THICK Sir?

NEW CONTROLLED PRICES:—

THIN 11d. and 1/3d. THICK 7d. and 11d.

Supplies limited—use sparingly

Made by Goodall, Backhouse & Co., Ltd., Leeds

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The TAYLORSUIT
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EQUIPMENT?



It's the latest and most comprehensive flying suit yet evolved—as near perfection as we can get it.

The Taylorsuit is a "safety suit" and an essential part of equipment. It has been designed to give comfort, freedom of movement, warmth, electric heating, buoyancy, fire resistance, quickness of removal. Booklet describing "The Taylorsuit" may be obtained direct from the manufacturers, who would post it to you "Care of" your Station Adjutant.

The Taylorsuit incorporates features covered by Irvin Patent No. 407445 and other patents pending.

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Put fuel
units "in
the bank"

If you are keeping just within your fuel target now, you are using too much fuel! When the really cold weather comes your consumption is bound to increase. Now, you should be building up a reserve.

What do I do...?

While the weather is still autumnal I put fuel units "in the bank" by: Lighting my boiler only when, and for as long as, hot water is needed in quantities; not lighting fires or stoves—coal, gas, electric or paraffin—until the really cold weather sets in; lagging my hot-water pipes and tank to make the most of every fuel unit I do use.

Issued by the Ministry of Information
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**An engineering
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for future manufacturing opportunities that would provide for the post-war employment of its operatives, approaching one thousand in number. Contact is therefore sought with manufacturers or merchants who anticipate that they may later on need quantity supplies either of parts or finished products to their own specification. (As an example, a manufacturing arrangement has already been made with one section of the motor industry.) To a thoroughly modern outlook and a knack of getting things right in spite of obstacles, advertisers add first-rate facilities for, and experience of, multiple production in steel, light alloys, etc., ranging from simple machining, welding, press work, etc., to the complete manufacture to specification of large assemblies hydraulically and electrically operated. Replies, which will be treated in strict confidence, should be addressed to:

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—their efficient service is unbeatable. The clean, comfortable shaving of Eclipse Blades (now in the popular slotted pattern) amply repays the persistence needed to obtain them while supplies are limited.

Obtainable only from Retailers.

JAMES NEILL & CO. (SHEFFIELD) LTD



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DISTINCTION
WITH THE
RIGHT AGE
COMMANDING
RESPECT

Proprietors
J. & W. HARDIE
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SHE SAVES FUEL
... SHE WEARS

WITH its side pleats tapering off from a full skirt to snug-fitting single material over the hips, this GOR-RAY skirt creation is smartness itself. Practical, too, for it permits maximum leg-freedom with the amount of material it is permissible to use. And how slenderness! Sidepleat Skirts are stocked by GOR-RAY agents everywhere.

Issued by C. STILLITZ,
Royal Leamington Spa.

Sidepleat Skirts



Last year, thanks to the warning we issued about the shortage of books—and thanks to the heed that was paid to it—most of our customers were able without undue difficulty to make a satisfactory selection for their Christmas presents.

This year we issue an even more urgent warning, for not only are there fewer books available, but, because of the greater scarcity of other types of gifts, more people than ever will be choosing books. Therefore, we urge those of our

customers who have always realized the advantages of books as presents, to shop early—and by shopping early we do not mean in the early days of December or even November. **You cannot start too soon. Start now.**

W. H. SMITH & SON, LTD. Head Office: STRAND HOUSE, LONDON, W.C. 2



Sulis—Nature's "pleasant to drink" remedy for all rheumatic and kindred complaints. From deep down in the earth gush the healing waters of Bath. These are bottled at the Springs, and more and more people are benefiting by drinking Sulis, either still or sparkling.

SULIS
The BRITISH
Mineral Water

(from Wine Merchants, Grocers,
Chemists, or direct from The
Springs, Stall Street, Bath.)



KING SIX CIGARS



10½^p each

In Cartons
of 2 & 5,
Boxes of 10,
Cabinets of 50.



Look for the King on the band

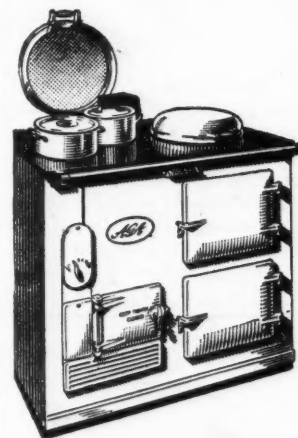
KING SIX is a British-made cigar, by Freeman's—the house with over 100 years' experience in fine cigar making.

Made by J. R. Freeman & Son, Ltd., makers of fine cigars since 1839.

royds

The AGA Cooker

Regd. Trade Mark



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its own
fuel

Guaranteed not to exceed a stated
annual fuel consumption



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(Props: Allied Ironfounders Limited)
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'Viyella'

Regd.

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FOR CERTAIN COMFORT IN UNCERTAIN CLIMATES



WHETHER AN OFFICER IS POSTED TO —, somewhere near the Equator, or — where it's often 15° below, 'Viyella' Service Shirts are his best choice. Their smooth healthy texture makes them comfortable in any extremes of climate, and their smartness on parade is as noticeable as ever, even after a long life of hard wear and washing. In Navy, Army and Air Force regulation styles and colours from 18/2, collars 2/6. 'Viyella' Service ties 3/-. Stocked by high-class hosiers and outfitters everywhere.

Overseas Agents and Representatives throughout the world.



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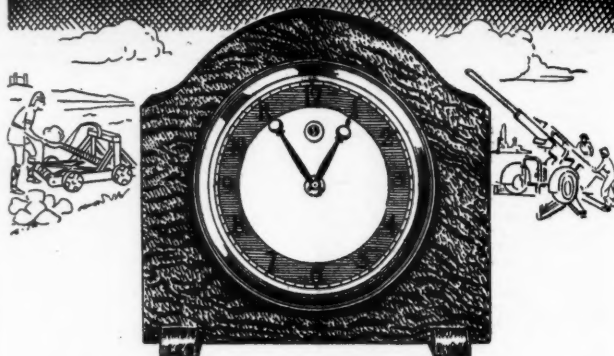


Batchelor's WINDSOR SOUP

HIGHLY CONCENTRATED
NUTRITIOUS • DELICIOUS

*P.S. Don't forget Batchelor's
Baked Beans in
Tomato Sauce!*

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To keep ahead, Britain must always look ahead, eager to adopt whatever makes for greater efficiency. You can show that progress animates your home and business by installing, as soon as after-the-War supplies come through, Smith "Sectric" Clocks. They are the last word in timekeeping appliances.

SMITH SECTRIC CLOCKS

plug in to Greenwich time

NO WINDING • NO REGULATING

Issued by SMITH'S ENGLISH CLOCKS LTD., Crickwood Works, London, N.W.2



"We live and learn, Auntie. It's only now that we have to make every tin of 'Mansion' go twice as far that I fully realise what an economical polish it really is. I'm sure I've always used more than necessary."

"I've always had a great opinion of 'Mansion,' my dear, but it surprised me to see how you got such a wonderful shine with so little polish."

MANSSION ANTISEPTIC WAX POLISH

—a little only is needed to keep the home bright, clean and healthy.

FOR FLOORS, FURNITURE AND LINOLEUM

Chiswick Products Ltd., London, W.4

MP/PP



PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCIII No. 5305

October 21 1942

Charivaria

"KNITTING is coming back into its own again," states a housewife. Slowly but surely our women seem to be losing their manhood.

An artist confesses he put ten years' work into a picture he has just sold. Nine of them are said to have been devoted to selling it.

It is contended that some of our judges are too old. Yet they can give many of us years.

A Whitechapel woman complained in a court that when she pushed her husband out of the window he came in through the door. It looks as if she put a bit too much side on him.



"Smoking cigarettes one on top of another," says a doctor, "is very harmful." And very difficult.

Soot from an adjacent chimney on fire invaded a London court. At first everybody pretended not to notice the black spots before their eyes, suspecting their livers.



"The PRIME MINISTER has imitators in the House. This is a sincere form of flattery," says a political commentator. Nevertheless, we have yet to see Mr. SHINWELL in a sombrero or a siren suit.

A production expert declares that sedentary work lessens a man's resistance. The more he sits the less he can stand.

Burglars who were discovered in a Scottish warehouse protested that they were members of the staff working overtime. Taking stock?

"Meat ration may be cut," runs an item. The determining factors being the knife and the meat.

A prisoner who escaped from a North of England court jumped into a police car and drove off. Is this what is known as setting the machinery of the law in motion?

Small boys should clearly understand that although towels now need coupons, soap is rationed and there is an economy campaign regarding water, this Utopian state of affairs will end with the war.

Things Which Might Have Been Expressed Differently

"Dismissing the case under the Probation of Offenders' Act, the Bench hoped the girl would take advantage of their leniency."—*Provincial Paper*.

The Germans have been asked to drink less beer. The rush into public-houses and beer-gardens to drink less beer is said to have been enormous.



"A Berlin message to a Swiss newspaper says that Switzerland was acting as intermediary in new negotiations for the exchange of seriously wounded prisoners. She had apparently slept the night in the bracken."—*Daily Sketch*.

Of course, that complicates things.

A new type of utility umbrella has no ferrule. Quite useless for prodding Generals.

The Pig

I AM not writing these words for the sake of the large pig-keepers of England, the hereditary owners of a thousand concrete pens and sties, but for the sake of the small pig-keeper about five foot high who wants to keep a pig in his back-yard or his front garden, the man who has never kept a pig before, but only been fascinated by other people's pigs, listened to them eating and watched with a curious mixture of altruism and self-interest their peculiar ways. It has always been my ambition to foster and fatten a pig of my own, but fate which denies us so many of the starry adventures of our dreams has hitherto willed it that I should be more of a pig-loser than a pig-keeper.

Once in a South Coast town I went to a tavern to while away some of the time that would elapse before the next motor-bus arrived. And there I took a ticket in a raffle for a pig. About three weeks later, being in the same predicament, I went to the same inn. As I was entering a man came out.

"Hullo," he said, "didn't I see you taking a ticket in the pig-affle the other day?"

A nameless terror seized me. "What was your number?" he went on. I told him.

"You won," he said.

I uttered a cry of despair and went back to the bus halt, for I did not know then and do not know to-day whether pigs are allowed on motor-buses. If they are I should think that the small pig-keeper of the outer suburbs could not do better than to take his pig out to one of the wide open heaths near London and enjoy the pageant of the passing year, while the pig enjoyed that part of it which falls profusely to the ground in the shape of acorns, beech-mast and chestnuts amongst the brown and golden leaves.

Not that these would satisfy the pig. They would only be the *hors d'œuvres* coming before the daily banquets which make up the breakfast, lunch, tea and dinner of the pig. An English prodigal son of 1942 instead of sharing the husks that swine do eat (which they certainly would not allow) would take all the food that was left over from his father's house, fatten one of the pigs and then call his father and his elder brother to the feast.

Pigs eat everything including haulms. I am not sure what these are, but it is a pity to have a plaque fastened to the pig-sty with the words "Haulm sweet haulm" written on it, as many small pig-keepers do, for you will get tired of the joke in a few months, long before the pig understands it and begins to laugh at the idea.

Pigs are very strong, very temperamental, and very delicate. If their desires are thwarted they eat the sty, lift the gate off its-hinges and come out for a little dessert. That is why an old comedian of the music-halls used to say "We've got a pig at home, and we call it Maud because it keeps coming into the garden." It is almost the only instance I can recall of honour being paid to the works of a great English poet on the music-hall stage, and it should have been mentioned in the centenary celebration of Alfred Lord Tennyson by the B.B.C. A good day's food for a three-months pig is three pounds of meal, four pounds of potatoes and five pounds of swill. This will save it from introversion and from eating timber and iron. More would cloy.

Many people realizing the enormous strength of the pig might suppose that it was better to keep it in a safe rather than in the back-garden, but that is not so, because the pig requires plenty of sunlight and a southern exposure, so that the garden often has to be turned round to satisfy its needs. If the pig is not kept warm it will convert its

food into heat instead of fat. I have been trying to do that myself for several weeks, but without success so far. It is useless to put an overcoat and a scarf on your pig, because it will tear them off and eat them and convert them into nothing at all.

The pig must be kept clean, dry, comfortable, happy and contented. This is done by building it a suitable abode. Any good architect and builder will knock you up a suitable abode for a pig out of the loose materials that you happen to have lying about. Or you can turn your house into a residence for the pig and live in the loose material yourself. The pig will not care. The floor should be made of beaten chalk or cement, and well drained, but you can make it of marble or malachite if you have any. The pig will not mind. There is a very good picture of a suitable sty for a pig in the pamphlet called "Housing the Pig" issued by The Small Pig-Keepers' Council, who live at Victoria House, Southampton Row, on whose behalf I am writing this little tract. The councillors are modest men who devote their lives to the psychology of pigs and the interior decoration of sties; their photographs seldom appear in the papers, but I count it a great distinction that they should have asked me to take up their cause. Or I would if they had.

In this picture of a sty, which is called an isometric sketch, there are only two slight errors. One is that most of the railings seem to have disappeared; they have probably been eaten by the pig. The other is that the gate has been left open so that the pig has got out and is probably in the garden. But the pen in which the pig sleeps is admirably depicted, has a corrugated iron roof and should be a lesson to all. The sump again is a veritable triumph of draughtsmanship, and cannot fail to delight those who hate modern tendencies in pictorial art.

Nothing is said in the pamphlet about the dangerous tendency to sentimentalism which may assail the small suburban pig-keeper and cause him to love the pig as a pig, and not as a source of future food. This is a temptation that must be resolutely pushed aside. Protected from draughts, housed royally, scratched occasionally and indefatigably fed, the pig will have lived its noble and proper life when it has turned as much of itself as possible into fat and refrained from consuming its trough, its sleeping-quarters, its railings, its gate or its owner. Men were ordained by providence to keep pigs. It is only in Germany that pigs keep men.

EVOE.

Landfall

A GREY old farmhouse, built of Cotswold stone,
'Mid steep-sloped pasture in the valley's fold
Where beechwoods rise behind; and all is shown
In mellow clarity by the evening's flooding gold.

On my cabin bulkhead, a snap, all faded,
A deadened semblance of my Gloucestershire farm,
A thing of dark and lesser dark, whose shaded
Shapes are lifeless and reft of charm.

Into my porthole, from across this foreign bay,
A shaft of sinking sun is shot. My bulkhead's lit
By a golden, glowing disc. Set in that ray
I see my farm on summer eves, as I remember it.



SOLDIER AND CITIZEN TOO

"If there's anything else you want me to do after working hours just let me know."



"Could you possibly spare me a few bones? I've just had such a nasty look from our street salvage collector."

Cross Purposes

THE train started, with the reluctant jerk inevitable in these days of chronic overloading, and ground its outward way through the series of unventilated tunnels which guard the approaches to St. Pancras Station.

I folded up my *Times* resolutely: the cross-word must wait. Here was work of international importance—the strengthening, no less, of the bonds of Anglo-American understanding. The officer in the middle seat opposite to me, with a silver bar on either shoulder and a slightly forlorn expression, must be shown that we are *not* a reserved or stand-offish people.

I felt instinctively that he would welcome an opportunity to enter into conversation with me and the other four occupants of the compartment. He would like to tell us about his hometown, and his mother, and what he

thought of our climate, and our policemen, and the way our traffic keeps to the wrong side of the street. But being aware of our natural aloofness, he was doubtless feeling inhibited. We must break the ice for him—or rather I must, for the others did not look co-operative.

One of them had been busy, ever since he took his seat, making ticks with a pencil down a column of figures in a typewritten manuscript. His *vis-à-vis* was a florid person with a sea-lion's moustache. The other pair consisted of an elderly and donnish individual immersed in *The Spectator*, and an obvious Civil Servant, silently nursing one of those intriguing black dispatch-cases with a crown on it, which are always being left behind in taxi-cabs.

After we had passed through Hendon I leaned forward and cleared my throat.

Four other gentlemen did likewise, and a ragged and unintelligible bellow resulted. I had been wrong: I was not alone, it seemed, in my determination to smash the legend of British insularity.

Under this five-fold salvo our Ally, who had been endeavouring to compose himself to slumber, opened his eyes and started violently. The man with the pencil offered him the evening paper, then returned to his ticks. Silence reigned again.

The Civil Servant was the first to put in a single shot.

"Have you been in our country long, sir?"

Our visitor looked up, and eyed him warily.

"Not that long."

"How does London compare in size and appearance with New York?"

"I was never in New York."

That put the Civil Service out of action. The sea-lion slipped in.

"Did those Hun fellers try to supper you comin' over. Torpedoes, and what not?"

"I wouldn't know."

The Don had the next shot.

"I wonder how you enjoy our English custom of travelling in closed compartments, instead of your long and admirably ventilated open coaches. How does it feel?"

"Cramped."

Plainly, if the purpose of this conversation was to establish an Anglo-American *entente*, the operation was not going according to plan. The home contingent were exceeding all expectations, but something seemed to have gone wrong overseas. It was time I came to the rescue with a more intimate, domestic, approach.

"Listen, Lootenant," I began, smiling; "just where is your hometown located?"

"Way back."

"In the Middle West, or West, maybe?"

"Around there."

"And the folks—your mother, and so on—are they living there right now?"

"I guess so."

"What is your latest news of them?"

"None."

I was about to switch to our policemen, when the sea-lion began to bark again.

"You fellers over there must have had a rotten life during that Prohibition nonsense. Still, I suppose you're makin' up for lost time now—what?"

"I don't use hard liquor."

It was the Don's turn again. He waved a hand towards the flying landscape; we were well out of London by this time.

"I wonder," he said, "how our simple countryside impresses you, after your own majestic lakes, forests, prairies. How does it appear to you?"

"Green."

"How true, and what an utterly adequate answer! 'England's green and pleasant land.'" The Don beamed perseveringly, and went on to announce that we were now passing through Luton, the seat of the English straw-hat industry.

The man with the pencil looked up to say that it was not Luton but St. Albans; then went on ticking.

The Don, who seemed to have got his second wind now, took the correction in his stride and stated that St. Albans had originally been called Verulamium by our Roman conquerors. He followed up with some details about Julius Caesar and Cassi-

velanus, and had just begun to quote a poem about Boadicea bleeding from the Roman rods when the Civil Servant, who may have belonged to the Office of Works and Planning, interposed with a description of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Alban. The Don, on his mettle, retaliated with a somewhat full account of the part played by the Abbey during the War of the Roses.

Our guest of honour, almost forgotten by this time, bowed his head, closed his eyes, and left them to it. . . .

Suddenly the door leading into the corridor slid back with a crash, and another American officer stood framed in the opening. He was of the husky and hearty type. He surveyed the drooping and motionless figure of his compatriot with glad surprise.

"Well, well," he exclaimed, "if it isn't my old buddy Silent Sam!" He leaned over, and dealt his late associate a disabling blow upon the nape of the neck.

"Lo, Ed!" remarked that officer, without enthusiasm.

"I got some of the gang right along the hallway," announced the jovial Ed. "They'll be tickled to death." He turned politely to ourselves. "You'll pardon me, gentlemen, if I remove this notorious chatterbox from your midst. I want to turn him loose among the boys for a spell. C'mon, Dumbo!"

He hailed his comrade forth into the corridor.

"What sort of bunch was that you struck, Sam?" I heard him ask as he slid the door to.

"The guy opposite to me was Fifth Column; the other four were looney. But I fooled 'em all."

"I'll bet you did, Sam!" I. H.



"No evenin' papers! No evenin' papers!"

The Patriot

IT was a dark bleak evening, and bitterly cold. Hail beat relentlessly against the window panes. Winter had come.

I placed the black-out boards snugly over the windows, drew the curtains and stuffed the keyhole cosily with plasticine.

Stepping into the padded trousers women had been recommended to wear, and tying them round the ankles with bits of carefully guarded string, I pulled on the wadded tunic as recommended by authority, pushing some cotton-waste I had by me up my sleeves; I bound straw round the elbows, as one might for precaution against frozen pipes, and remembering the winter treatment for the eucalyptus plant, draped a shawl of sacking over my shoulders; I put on two pairs of football stockings from the property-box, and a pair of old-world cloth snow-boots from the attic.

I squeezed my arms into a draught-resisting mackintosh as directed, and drew a balacava helmet, once destined for the Finns, over my head. A flat tin hot-water bottle lay ready at my feet. I pulled up the hearth-rug over my knees.

Smug in the knowledge that my under-garment, far from being a glamorous affair of lace and nimon, was of the stoutest knitted yarn, I rubbed my hands, conscious of righteousness.

I drew up the patched chintz chair to the cold white silence of the unlit gas-fire, and taking up a book from the table by my side, began, at random, to read.

"Arabella reclined in the chaise longue and flung off the ermine cape she was wearing. A collar of diamonds sparkled on her white throat, a single star in her auburn hair. She idly stretched out a transparent hand to the glowing embers. The door opened and a tall footman swiftly entered, and flung more fuel on to the already blazing logs. The flames leapt higher. . . ."

An icy chill crept down my spine. I didn't care. I would have none of it. Something was in the back of my mind. Where had I read something about . . . ? I had it! Tweedledum and Tweedledee. They were the boys! I hurried upstairs as fast as my impedimenta would allow, and whipping off an eiderdown, wound it securely round my neck, and placed on my head a large black coal-scuttle. I should not be needing that this winter.

Little Talks

WHAT are you reading?
The Conservative Education Committee Youth Plan. What d'you think of it?

Yesterday, as I steamed under a London bridge at the wheel of a vessel flying the White Ensign, three boys on the bridge threw a handful of gravel in my face. I was wearing spectacles.

Well?

"Well?" you say! That was not my comment at all.

What did you say?

I cannot repeat everything I said. But I said, as I always say—

Oh, this has happened before?

Often. More often it's spitting than gravel, it's true. But, strangely enough, it always annoys me. Particularly gravel or stones. Because I always wear spectacles, and they can be seen a mile away.

But you mustn't allow mere personal irritation—

Personal irritation! My hat! If I am suddenly blinded by a bit of glass in the eye as I approach a bridge with the tide under me, the chances are that my vessel will hit the bridge and be sunk. And when she belongs to His Majesty—

Yes, but—

If you saw the Youth Movement throwing stones at the driver of an Army lorry would you say that it was a mere matter of "personal irritation"?

Now don't get excited. I withdraw. What did you say?

I said, among other things, as I came through the bridge and turned to receive another volley: "You poor dear frustrated misunderstood little darlings, what a tragedy it is that for seventy years the taxpayer has been providing free compulsory education—and now you can do a thing like that!"

I sympathize. But what has all this got to do with the Youth Plan?

If those little dears had been Sea Scouts, Boy Scouts, Boys' Brigaders, Cadets, or the like, they'd never have done such a thing. Now, I haven't read this Report—

Nobody who discusses Reports ever has.

True. But I understand that one proposal is that every boy between fourteen and eighteen must be a member of one of these admirable bodies—

Corps.

The same thing. And, if that's all, I must say that, so far, I can't quite see why it's caused such a fuss.

I see. Anything that stops boys throwing stones at you—

Anything that stops them from throwing stones at any mariner proceeding under a bridge—whether in a battleship, a tug, or a canoe.

You're not being quite fair to the kids. They don't know any better.

Exactly. They're so rottenly educated that outside school they haven't the first notion how to behave. The Scouts would teach 'em.

But when they're out of school the poor little devils have nowhere to go—no playgrounds, no—

Not enough, I agree. But if this plan caught on there would have to be more, I suppose. Though, mind you, that's no real answer. You don't need vast playgrounds for everybody—and you'll never get them—

Nationalize the land.

All right. But you won't make this bijou island any bigger, or our cities any smaller. Anyway, you don't need a huge playground to learn knots and splices, semaphore, morse, carpentering, the stars, and so on. Take these little—these boys on the bridge. Evidently they're interested in the water. Well, there are Sea Scouts all up and down the river—and jolly fine work they've done, some of them, in the war. Not enough of them, I agree. But apart from that, in West London, where they were, those boys have got the whole foreshore to play with if they like—an enormous playground, free for all. They can roam about, throw stones in the water, catch fish, swim, watch people mending and painting boats, give 'em a hand, learn all sorts of things. A few of them do. But most of them are just itinerant pests, damaging or interfering with anything they can. Why, they'll deliberately undo your moorings so that a boat drifts away when the tide comes up.

You mean they've no sense of property—your property.

I mean they've no sense of enjoying themselves in a civilized way—no respect, I don't say for my boat only, but for any boat—for a boat as a boat. In fact, I used to lend some of them a boat now and then, and the kids were grateful and careful with her. And then they'd let some of their mates get hold of her, and she'd be brought back by the police with the oars missing. So I gave it up. Now, being in the Scouts cures all that at once. I'd lend a boat to the Scouts any day. They get a sense, not of property—but decency—a sense of pride in doing things properly and well.

Well, I think the whole scheme's rank Fascism.

Why?

Compulsion! Regimentation of Youth. Why it's the Hitler Youth Movement all over again.

Can't see it. Listen. We were talking about Education the other day, weren't we?

You were. I listened.

Oh, no. You said a lot. You said, I think, that you were in favour of raising the school age from fourteen to sixteen?

Certainly.

No exemptions?

No. The moment you allow exemptions, you—

That is, you'd compel every parent to keep his child at school till sixteen, whether he or the child wanted it or not?

Yes.

Isn't that a bit Fascist?

Quite different.

All right. Well, then, I think you said you wanted to abolish the Public Schools and compel—compel, mind you—every parent, rich and poor, to send his children to the same State school? Correct?

Certainly.

Isn't that a shade "Fascistic"? Isn't there the faintest touch of "regimentation" about it? Pouring every boy into the same State mould and turning him out in the same State model. What's the difference between that and the Hitler Youth Movement?

Why, the spirit—the teaching—everything.

Oh? I see. Then the mere presence of the element of compulsion does not necessarily make an educational proposal "Fascist"?

I suppose not. But compulsory education is one thing, and compulsory membership of the Boy Scouts or something is another.

I don't see why. Unless, of course, you mean that the only form of education is sitting at a desk. Education, surely, means preparation for life: and if the Sea Scouts are not doing that—

Preparation for the military life.

Not at all. I was at a coast-station early in the war where all the signalling to the merchant-ships (and others) was done by a dozen Sea Scouts of about sixteen to seventeen. They never fired a shot, but they were invaluable. They didn't spend their earlier days throwing gravel at the mariner from London bridges.

I don't call that sort of thing education.

Ah. I thought not. Well, I do—or a part of it. So what it boils down to is this—that you think that to compel a boy to sit at a desk from fourteen to sixteen and do geography and sums is “progressive” and good: but to compel him to join the Sea Scouts as well, learn knots and splices, and how to sail a boat—that’s reactionary and Fascist. Is that right?

As usual, you’ve twisted everything round.

Yes, in order to get things straight.

A. P. H.

Neutrality Over Berlin

AS everybody is more or less interested in strategy these days, the musings of Muirphaigh, who usually lives in rather a dream of his own, may now be somewhat relevant. We met one day in a bus going out of Dublin, and I asked him what he was doing.

“I have taken an interest in strategy,” he said, “lately, and I have been a good deal occupied trying to work out a scheme.”

“What kind of strategy?” I asked.

“Irish strategy,” he said.

“But I thought Ireland was neutral. Our part of it, I mean,” I answered.

“Most certainly it is neutral,” said Muirphaigh.

“Even though the Germans bombed Dublin last year?” I suggested.

“That had nothing to do with it,” said Muirphaigh. “The whole thing was gone into very carefully at the time. There may have been some expression of what might have been taken for slight dissatisfaction on our part; but it was all gone into; and the upshot of it was, after full discussion, that it was agreed on both sides that there was nothing un-neutral about it. So, of course, we remain neutral.”

“I see,” I said. “Then what are you going to do about it?”

“We shall guard neutrality as our most precious heritage,” said Muirphaigh.

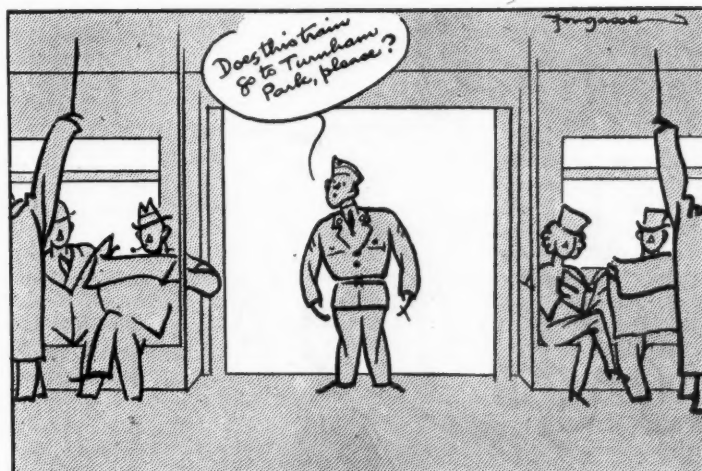
“But about your strategy?” I asked.

“Well, I can’t tell you the details,” he said. “Those would be the property of the Irish Air Force, if they accept my suggestions. They have to do with the bombing of Berlin.”

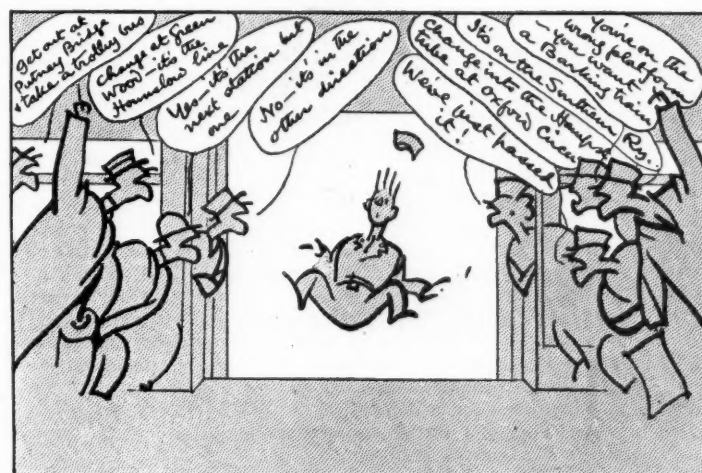
“But I thought you said we were neutral,” I expostulated.

“Shall I ever get you to understand?” asked Muirphaigh. “Amn’t I after telling you that the whole thing has been gone into and that there was

PASSION FOR HELPFULNESS



1



2

nothing un-neutral in bombing Dublin. And isn't Dublin a capital city, as great as any in the world, and civilized a thousand years before—"

"Yes, yes, I know," I said.

"Well, then, and isn't Berlin a capital too?" he said. "Sure it is. But you've been living so long abroad you can't understand how things are. They've no sense in other countries. How should they have any? They never had St. Patrick to teach them.

But don't be trying to shake our neutrality. We'll not surrender that to any man in the world."

And the bus stopped at that moment and Muirphaigh swung out. ANON.

EXPLANATION

Mr. Punch wishes to make it clear that there is no connection or relationship between the Miss PHYLLIS BENTLEY famous as a weight-lifter in the early nineties (who was mentioned last week on page 310) and Miss PHYLLIS BENTLEY the well-known contemporary novelist.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



"That's Max Hobstein, the big theatrical agent. Poor chap, he's had to give up his car."

Inside Information

THE situation's clearing,
Last night another wedge
Surrounded a depression
And dodged a dangerous ledge:
Don't ask me my authority,
My lips are sealed, of course—
I heard it from a spokesman,
I learnt it from a source.

A unit and an element
Are walking hand in hand,
It isn't all too easy with
Such quantities of sand;
But they will surely infiltrate
Or penetrate in force:
I heard it from a spokesman,
I learnt it from a source.

Field-Marshal X has ready
Two pincers and a prong,
I've got it on authority
That now we shan't be long:
It wasn't just a channel,
Or mouth of any horse—
I heard it from a spokesman,
I learnt it from a source.

J. C. S.

Molesworth Goes Rustic.

Contains: Diary of harvesting, loonies, aples cows seeds farmers and fruit.

Aug. 28. i sa gosh all plans upset i.e. Pop should not haf been on embarkation leave at all as war office were thinking of molesworth c. St. J. A, major, r. sigs who haf already been in egypt two years. Pop sa it is scandalous disgraceful but later see him do hornpipe in bathroom and sa 8 weeks leave in bag and no foreign service hurra cheers cheers. Mum also do hornpipe but brake plate which will haf to be replaced as on inventory and not one she haf sneaked from locked cupboard. Situation leave molesworth 2 cold. He sa he haf long suspected impasse at the ministry and zoom away to inspect plum harvest.

Aug. 29. molesworth 2 confined to bed. Plum harvest rather bakward (official).

Sept. 1. Complications viz Pop haf choice of joining unit in aberdeen or stationed next door to grans house. He dercid immediately for aberdeen and buzz small cherry stone at molesworth 2 who sa So you can't take it? from larder. Mum is browned off at this i.e. becos Pop always so nasty about mother but find 2 unladered stockings and ½ bottle of scent poo gosh and cheer up at once. P.C. arive from gran who sa she going to the country to fite on harvest front and think boys should do bit also. Strong pi-jaw from Pop who sa all boys to help national effort and bend backs with will. Chiz as he sa to mum Now we can haf wizard last week in town. Hay-ho all boys are stooges.

Sept. 4. Cheers cheers arive with gran at tuough farm viz golightly court farm dainty teas cream camping ground plums in season. Cow chickens dog pig ect see gran and cry bitterly. Knock knock where is farmer? Enter super weed viz silas croker (farmer) he see gran and almost moo too. Eat tuough tea in parlor but chiz as molesworth 2 sa tea O.K. but what about cream plums and camping? All larff inkluding mrs croker, granny croker and granny croker's friend mrs posnett they sa molesworth 2 such a pritty child cheers cheers. All then look at me and words freeze on lips wot do they expect robert taylor?

Sept. 5. Chirup chirup rise with dawn but all animals sleeping chiz but not bad actually as zoom through wood and pester all flies wasps and bluebotles. Return to farm which in confusion as dairy haf not called. Gran sa why not milk own cows but nothing doing as only one cow i.e. Poppy which haf not given milk for 3 years. silas croker sa he slowly coming to konklusion that cow no use. Gran then sugest slorter house but mrs posnett fante away she canot stand blud. molesworth 2 highly delited he swank blud daggers ect favorite subjeckts and granny .croker fante too. Result 2 heavy bombers down. Pilot, molesworth 2 award himself v.c.

Sept. 8. Heavy rane storm. silas croker shake head.

Sept. 9. Thunder and hail. Croker in despair.

Sept. 10. More rane. Croker sa if this do not hold up he will be ruined. Gran leap to feet. She sa give her a rake and harvest will yet be saved. molesworth 2 agree, providing there sunshine and light drying wind and ooze off to bomb chickens out of drawing room. Gran now return to parlor with rake but croker repli no go as no harvest anyway. He only worred becos he haf left mack in vilage bus and canot do rounds for insurance coy. He ask if he can intrrest gran in life policy or burglary risk. Find molesworth 2



"Will these do, dear? I can't find a champagne-bottle."

who lie in dog kenel he haf been shot down by chicken and is dead once more.

Sept. 11. Gran find PROSPECTUS in bedroom viz. nice quiet little company with firm dividends invest now.

Sept. 14. Take farm dog for hunt but feeble actually as dog think he friend of man and only wish to pla with rabbits like cristofer robin, poo and wendy. Pop into vilage for 2 oz. persnal rashion but meet Loony lil, vilage idiot, in honeysukle lane she is bats and sing feeble songs viz: Maying lads tie on your ribons and wheel empty pram what is the sense of it? Chiz actually as she sa i am long lost son. Vilage oiks highly delited they cheer like mad so tuough up young george thomas also postman baines youngest. From all these operations two of our teeth are missing.

Sept. 15. croker ask gran if she haf ever studied comerial aspekt of mushrooms?

Sept. 16. Poppy (cow) go too far as she drink all milk rashion. Gran sa if not slorter house why not market? mr croker agree and borow traler from a.r.p. He haf only paid for half of Poppy but will raise rest on sale and that will make her all his. Auctioneer sa what am i bid for this remarkable beast and molesworth 2 swank as he think he refering to him. Make tuough repli i.e. i would not give d. for anyone who haf been shot down by chicken he is a fule. Farmers all shake heads at Poppy but cunning croker run up bidding and finally buy for twenty pounds gosh. Gran sa is this wise but croker only wink. He sa slickest thing he ever done and have BEER in spotted dog.

Sept. 18. Find farm dog who gaze at weedy calendar viz:

If mistress haf a walk for me
A model doggy i will be.

Throw stone for dog but he only take refuge under cow. i wash my hands of him.

Sept. 19. a.r.p. come for traler as they think there fire on somewhere.

Sept. 22. Grate day viz gran throw down force spoon at brekfast and give stiring message Plough for victory.

THEY THAT GO DOWN TO THE SEA IN SHIPS

"AS you may well imagine this is about the worst time of the year to be at sea, and so at this time such articles as you send are a genuine comfort to me."

Now more than ever before are we dependent for our livelihood upon the courage and steadfastness of our gallant crews "that go down to the sea in ships." You, by your generous gifts to the PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, can help to alleviate their sufferings, and to make their task less arduous. We rely on you because we know, that like them, you will not let us down. All donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

mr croker sa dang from state of market he will jolly well haf to but no plough. Gran sa Fiddledee dee, make one. Cheers cheers all infektet with enthusiasm mrs croker scrub dairy, gran croker knit furously and mr croker borow small plough from over to copleys place. Cheers cheers enter gran on tractor and zoom around field. Birds sing cows graze and chickens peck everbode. Read wizard story 9 chinese Murders to farm dog which promptly catch rat.

Sept. 23. All in bed with colds. That is life.

Sept. 24. Moo.

the end.



"Well, it's no use crying over spilt milk."



"Yes, damage has been done, there is no denying—in fact it is permitted to say so in public!"

The Stroller

HE loved of old to range aloof,
To pad, as people say, the hoof
In quiet road and lane;
The high lark twittered overhead
And rural objects round him fed
His meditative vein.

The casual bike and pony-shay
He met upon his pensive way
And passed without alarm;
He little feared the laden cart
Creaking with livestock for the mart
Or produce of the farm.

Then came the car. With stink and noise
It shook his mental equipoise;
His once deliberate pace
Before its growing threat was changed
To leappings as of one deranged
With wild unstudied grace;

But dryness seized the petrol-pump
And private cars were on the dump
Or otherwise bestowed;
Again he meets upon his hike
The pony-shay and casual bike
In quiet lane and road.

He sniffs again a fragrant air
And moving slowly here and there
Pauses at times to mark
The sights that pleased him well of yore,
Nor does he, naturally, ignore
The high and twittering lark.

And yet the old man's peace has gone;
As sadly now he wanders on
He notes the warrior plane
And rumour of a distant gun
And thinks, when all is said and done,
He'd have those cars again. **DUM-DUM.**



THE BOOMERANG

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, October 13th.—House of Lords: The Mixture as Before.

House of Commons: Mr. Churchill asks for Silence.

Wednesday, October 14th.—House of Commons: Mae pob peth wedi mynd yn iawn—so to speak.

Thursday, October 15th.—House of Commons: The Premier Makes an Announcement.

Tuesday, October 13th.—Lord MOTTISTONE nearly did it again. A mere fortnight ago, in the rôle of CROMWELL, he marched his merry men into the House of Lords, demanding that the male population should be armed against a possible invader, only to retire, in the rôle of the Noble Duke of York, to (presumably) prepared positions when the Government defied the lightning.

To-day he made much the same demand once more. He wanted Home Guards taught to fight fires and to do Civil Defence work generally and Civil

done only if some training were given. He drew a harrowing picture of men who might pull the pins out of hand-grenades and then carelessly throw them (the grenades) down. In which case, of course, the grenades would as carelessly throw the men up.

Lord MOTTISTONE made the revolutionary suggestion that we should have a Minister of Common Sense. This was received with what (in any place less august) would have been described as catcalls.

He charged the Government with adopting the argumentative methods of HEINRICH OLLENDORF, whose delightful non-sequitur questions and answers taught us (or did not teach us) languages in our youth. OLLENDORF would make his victim inquire about the well-being of one's grandfather's pen, to receive the startling, if informative, reply that the other person's great-aunt was recovering from her indisposition, or possessed a wheelbarrow.

Lord MOTTISTONE contributed a neat piece to the Ollendorf Museum: "An American said to me that we were making it more and more difficult for him to get about, by abolishing signposts—yet we were not teaching our people to shoot."

He also showed a touching faith in the loyalty of the British pigeon for, condemning the use of church-bells as an invasion alarm on the ground that they might be employed by the enemy to give false alarms, he recommended the use of pigeons instead. Would these wily birds fly straight to Dr. GOEBBELS with false news, on the "homing" principle?

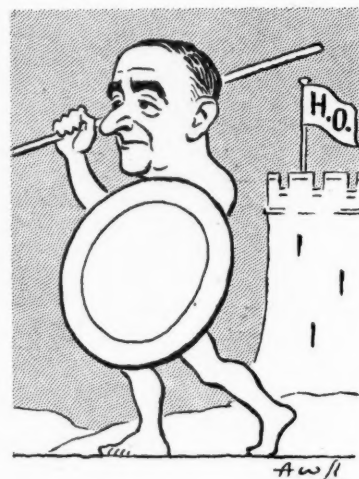
Pursuing battle-drill tactics, 2nd i/c Lord CORK came up on the other side of the House supporting his Section Leader. He got so vehement about it that their Lordships listened breathlessly (and, truth to tell, rather hopefully) for the end of a sentence which ran: "This is the work of pig-headed, small-minded . . ." His nautical Lordship gulped, quivered, and ended disappointingly ". . . Authorities."

Loosening his collar, Lord CORK mentioned the "muddled meanderings of the mediaeval mind," which he blamed for the failure to meet Lord MOTTISTONE's demands.

But Lord MANSFIELD feared that the Home Guard might become the national maid-of-all-work, forced to do too much, and reminded the House of an oft-overlooked fact—that Home Guards have incidentally to work for their livings. He wanted a special badge for the founder-members of the Home Guard, who had borne the heat

and burden of the day—and the cold and boredom of the night—when they had no arms but stout hearts and patriotism.

Lord GAINFORD contributed the slight but useful thought that it was better for a Home Guard to know how



AN UNEXPECTED CHAMPION

[Mr. Morrison's Bill for the amalgamation of all police forces received the whole-hearted support of Mr. Shinwell.]

to use a fire-hose than for him not to know. Lord (AUCKLAND) GEDDES, however, in a maiden speech, took Lord MANSFIELD's side and opined that no man could effectively be three things at once: a civilian worker, a soldier, and a fireman.

Then the Duke of DEVONSHIRE, whose Ministerial interest is India, read a reply on behalf of the Government—with Lord CROFT, Under-Secretary for War, as an attentive listener. Looking ruefully at his somewhat scanty "brief," the Duke explained that officialdom rationed the straw so as to limit the number of bricks an official spokesman might drop. He certainly dropped none, or any information either, if it came to that. He threw Lord MANSFIELD a small crumb (or bricklet) by announcing that the special badge idea was under consideration.

Lord MOTTISTONE, finding the buck (or brick) neatly delivered once more at his door for necessary action, dragged poor OLLENDORF into the contest again, and complained that the Duke had used "bow-and-arrow" arguments. He improved a bit on OLLENDORF by quoting CLEMENCEAU as saying: "This war is too serious to



THE SMALL TRADER'S FAIRY GODMOTHER

MR. DALTON
(President of the Board of Trade)

Defence workers taught to use arms and act as Home Guards. His arguments were the same as before—that if the invader came everyone would want to use a gun in defence of this land of ours, and that this could be



"Fortunately, being a large household, we're able to feed him on scraps."

be left to the soldiers." This, in support of a case that *everyone* should become a soldier, struck the House as being a bit rich.

Looking around for allies, his Lordship sighted Lord SIMON on the Woolsack, and mentioned that that nobleman had "probably saved Stalingrad" by his recent announcement that every Britisher worth the name would fight for his native land.

The late lamented OLLENDORF no doubt gyrated quite a lot in his tomb, in sheer envy. A noble Lord sitting near your scribe was heard to comment that this was "Ollendorful reasoning!"

Still performing his battle-drill strictly according to the book, Lord MOTTISTONE asked Lord CRANBORNE, Leader of the House, for "an assurance." What about, he did not say. Nor did Lord CRANBORNE, who sat immobile and impassive. So there was a division, in which Lord MOTTISTONE was defeated by 28 votes to 17. He seemed quite happy, and went out murmuring: "*Avez-vous le Tommy-gun de ma firewatcher?*"—No, but I have the hosepipe of your Home Guard."

In the Commons—which was in serious mood—Mr. CHURCHILL confided that we had asked the German

Government to desist from chaining British prisoners in their hands as a "reprisal" for the alleged tying up of prisoners taken by us at the Dieppe Commando raid. Till the result became known, he urged the maintenance of silence. The House agreed.

Mr. HUGH DALTON, President of the Board of Trade, then announced in those admirably audible tones of his that the little shops, like the little ships and the little nations, are to come into their own as a result of the war. They would be guaranteed a fair share of the commodities available, to ensure that the little towns, too, had justice. Proposals to squeeze out of business thousands of small traders had been dropped. The House seemed pleased.

Wednesday, October 14th.—The Commons went all bi-lingual to-day, over the Welsh Courts Bill. Mr. Speaker seemed to be in some doubt from time to time whether some of the more fervent Welsh Members were not speaking their native tongue, but gave them the benefit of the doubt.

Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, Home Secretary, who is proud of the fact that he is a Londoner, presented this piece of justice to a small nation, saying that it would give pleasure. Welsh Members

—who had the House to themselves—said "Hear, hear!" with gusto.

Sir HENRY MORRIS-JONES, whose labours were crowned by this Bill, proudly told the House that the Welsh language was the parent of the Greek tongue, and had been a beauteous flowing thing before history began. He proceeded to give a sample of the flowing beauty, to the perturbation of Mr. Speaker, who recalled a rule against using any but the English language in the House.

Members then argued some about the proposal to amalgamate small police forces. This time, Mr. MORRISON did not have so smooth a ride, but the "end of the road" (as Sir HARRY LAUDER and Mr. CHURCHILL would put it) was the same. He got his way.

Thursday, October 15th.—Mr. CHURCHILL made a welcome—and loudly cheered—announcement in the Commons to-day. It was that Field-Marshal SMUTS, Prime Minister of South Africa, now visiting Britain, will address Members of both Houses.

When, how, and where one cannot tell. The House went into secret session to discuss these details.

Then M.P.s went home. And that was a day.

Our Winter Collection

CET hiver, madame, on va porter, je crois,
Des confections assez singulières,
Mais même si elles ne seront pas très chic, ma foi,
Elles seront, je vous le promets, très chères!

Laissez-moi vous montrer, de la part de notre maison,
Quelques petites choses qui vous plairont, j'en suis sûre—
Voici, madame, une ravissante combinaison,
Tricotée d'une laine étrangement dure.

Cette chemise de nuit, fabriquée d'une souple flanelle,
Elle a du chien, n'est ce pas, avec ses manches bouffantes?
On lès offre en deux couleurs, gris ou miel,
Et ça vous garantira une nuit vraiment étouffante.

Regardez, madame, cette jupe d'une simplicité exquise,
D'une serge bleu marin—très jeune, très écolière!
Et je parie que Madame aura l'air d'une Marquise
Dans ce balaclava de poil de dromadaire.

A la fin, je vous offre, comme pièce de résistance,
Des sabots! Une plaisanterie extrêmement gaie!
Ils sont d'une incommodité immense,
Mais là-dedans vous marcherez vers la paix. V. G.

H. J. Talking

A CURIOUS thing about birds is that without any financial stranglehold they have captured the Press and the publishers, so that you see few words printed against them and many in their praise. I suspect that before aeroplanes man was impressed because they could fly about and he could not, man always having an inferiority complex with regard to the other animals, though he is much the best type of animal himself. You can make people admit this by asking them if they would prefer to have a human being or a dear little rabbit look after them when they are ill. Now that men can fly long distances accurately there is no need to admire birds: nor can they fly with luggage as a man can do. Birds make horrible sounds, much less varied than those made by pianos, and they cannot sing tunes nor can they sing in parts like the Welsh. The only useful bird is the hen, and that is even less attractive than the other breeds. Bird-lovers try to skate lightly over the hen but, after all, it is one and has just the same characteristics as other birds except that it is larger and hugs the ground more so that you see its bad qualities more easily. Some people like birds really because they know many different kinds and can point them out, which is easy as they always choose birds which are just flying out of sight. Again, birds make lawns untidy, which is what deck-chairs never seem to do. All in all I tend to resent birds, and when in prison got no comfort, as you are supposed to, from a bird which used to come and drop worms through the bars of my cell.

The way I got into this prison was over a passport photograph. I had to get the passport in a hurry and snatched an old photograph of myself at random and it was not until a policeman at a frontier looked carefully at it that I noticed I had chosen a photograph of myself as *Siegfried* when our local operatic society were doing *The Ring*. He arrested me and threw me into prison, and when the consul came he was a kind of part-time consul and

tried to sell me insurance, and when I wouldn't buy any, went away and refused to return. It was not a bad cell, being above ground and having many interesting inscriptions left there by a man who composed subversive crossword puzzles. After a bit, however, I thought that doing puzzles was *infra dig.* for a scientist and set my wits to work about escaping. Unfortunately nothing I could do would ingratiate me with the guards. I gave them money to send out for drink, but unfortunately they were teetotallers and bought ginger-beer. I tried to get them to strike by telling them their conditions were bad, but this annoyed them as they were two brothers who owned the prison and ran it as proprietors and were proud of it as a model prison. Then I tried to distract them with conjuring-tricks but I knew only two and one required a trap-door, which forced me to fall back on the other, and as this was making a coin vanish it palled after a bit. Finally I was reduced to attempting to dig my way out, and this was difficult as the walls and floor were concrete and I had only a spoon. I tried to make it into a file and attack the bars, but to make a spoon into a file you need some kind of machine which I hadn't got, and it merely sharpened the spoon when I rubbed it on the floor, which made eating dangerous.

The way I finally left the prison was by paying a fee to the jailer to take a fresh photograph of me and thus comply with the passport regulations, but in some ways bilked is what I felt, being of a romantic disposition and annoyed at not really making an escape. When asked to relate my experiences in prison I have often felt humiliated by this absence of an escape to complete them, and only my malady prevents my manufacturing a correct ending for the tale, this malady being that when I tell lies I hiccup. I have tried many cures, such as drinking from the opposite side of a glass immediately afterwards, though those who are much in my company are put on their guard by even a single hiccup, and an electrical one, in which I had to wear an apparatus and plug myself into the mains before lying, my style being cramped by having so to do. When I have been giving evidence cross-examining counsel have submitted that my hiccups are admissible, and many legal points concerning them have been argued.

This question of cures crops up from time to time in my mind when I remember that my brother Coot used once to write a medical column in a paper called *The Valetudinarian*, which catered for people who were interested in their health. Most of it was correspondence columns in which readers described their illnesses at length, but there were also general medical articles bringing new diseases to the attention of readers. My brother Coot was supposed to strike a lighter note in his column, and had competitions, such as giving lists of symptoms and you had to decide what they were symptoms of. Another kind of competition was with temperature charts, those producing the most unusual one being very proud to see it printed. He would also occasionally review books such as *Every Man His Own Surgeon*, *Simple Home-made Anaesthetics* and *The Confessions of Sydney, Lord Wimpole—the Man they Couldn't Kill*.

Like most scientists I am more than anxious that my science should be used by doctors and do all in my power to bring it to their attention, one of my methods being paying journalists to mention it in their plays, medical students and nurses being confirmed playgoers. I also once opened a nursing home, my wife more than co-operating with me, and unbeknownst to the doctors used my science on their patients, mentioning it only when they were cured. It took some ado to prevent my wife taking an active part in the nursing home, though she was responsible for curing a dipsomaniac who woke up to find her peering into his face.



"I think you're very clever—I couldn't even draw a straight line."

Deceit?

DORIS, for all that she may be
(and indeed is)
a heartless little minx,
is the heart of my heart
and the light of my eye.
So, when the Ministry of Labour and
National Service told her
they proposed to transfer her
to a munitions factory in a scarlet
area,
I wrote to them.
"Dear Ministry of Labour and
National Service,"
I wrote,
"Couldn't you possibly move some
other girl, not Doris,
seeing that she is the heart of my heart
and the light of my eye?"

And they replied
very courteously
saying that they had had my letter
under consideration and regretted
that,
in view of the fact that Doris
was
a
mobile
ancillary
sub-clerical
non-pivotal
woman worker
in an amber area,
there was nothing that they could do
with her
short of moving her to a munitions
factory in a scarlet area.

Why,
Doris,
heart of my heart,
light of my eye,
why
through the long years
have you so deceived me?
I knew that you addressed letters in
an office
and that you could not manage short-
hand or typing
but never
never
did I guess
about your being
a mobile ancillary sub-clerical non-
pivotal woman worker
in an amber area.

At the Play

THE DUKE IN DARKNESS (ST. JAMES'S)
THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST
(PHENIX)

Eager Playgoer: What kind of Duke, and what sort of darkness?

Jaded Critic: A French duke of the late sixteenth century, and the darkness of pretended blindness, since he has been mouldering in an enemy Duke's tower for fifteen years and seeks a chance of escape.

E. P.: And does he escape?

J. C.: Yes, at the end of the play after three exciting Acts. His fellow-prisoner, called *Gribaud*, goes mad and threatens to disclose the plans for escape. So *Gribaud* has to be poisoned, much though the Duke hates having to do it.

E. P.: How can an imprisoned Duke obtain any poison?

J. C.: His new attendant, *Voulain*, turns out to be one of his subjects who has wormed his way into the enemy Duke's service in order to help his master to escape. He brings up the poison in a jugful of wine.

E. P.: But do you believe escape from a dungeon in the Middle Ages was as easy as that?

J. C.: It is not made to seem in the least easy—and, incidentally, it is not a dungeon, but the top of a lofty tower. *PATRICK HAMILTON* is an extremely ingenious playwright, and he communicates the extraordinary difficulty of *Voulain's* enterprise most persuasively. He has also been helped by the actor who plays the part, a young actor called *HUGH BURDEN*.

E. P.: But I have never heard of Mr. *BURDEN*.

J. C.: All the more reason for going to the St. James's. He is an actor you will probably hear about in the future. Incidentally the Duke is very well played by *LESLIE BANKS*, and the poor madman movingly by *MICHAEL REDGRAVE*.

E. P.: Ah, now it begins to sound interesting! Is there any light relief?

J. C.: Yes, in the middle Act the

tyrant Duke, "flown with insolence and wine," comes up to gloat over his captives. He is accompanied by a haughty minion who thinks it great fun to test the prisoner's blindness with a red-hot poker. But the brave Duke does not blink an eyelid or interrupt himself in a long speech he is delivering about the faith of the oppressed.

E. P.: That does not sound very jolly to me, but I suspect you are being ironical as usual. Are there any ladies in the play?



WAYS OF ESCAPE

<i>Duke of Latteraine</i>	MR. LESLIE BANKS
<i>Voulain</i>	MR. HUGH BURDEN
<i>Gribaud</i>	MR. MICHAEL REDGRAVE

J. C.: None.

E. P.: And yet you recommend me to see the thing?

J. C.: I do. It is intensely dramatic. It is intelligent. It is cleverly wrought. It is unusual. It has no gadzookery or egaderry in its language. It is plain, straight, and likely. It is remarkably well produced (Mr. *REDGRAVE*). The appalling visitors wear delicious clothes (Professor *ERNEST STERN*). The actors I have mentioned are first-rate, and the subsidiary people do not let them down.

E. P.: But it sounds just like a melodrama.

J. C.: Well, what on earth's the

matter with a good melodrama? That is what this is—an adult, a civilized, a *cis-pontine* melodrama.

Critic and playgoer will doubtless find themselves in far greater accord about the revival of *WILDE's* masterpiece at the Phoenix. Mr. *GIELGUD* in a graceful speech at curtain-fall justly implied that this high comedy can never have been better played than it is now. All the same one takes leave to question the correctness of one new performance. Does Mr. *CYRIL RITCHARD* wholly realize the importance of being *Algernon*? He is a most amusing comedian in musical-comedy and revue. But those, as *Lady Bracknell* would say, are scarcely the sphere calculated to form a fitting department for a nephew of hers inhabiting a flat in Half-Moon Street in the middle of the eighteen-nineties. Mr. *RITCHARD*, in consequence, is the only player in this near-perfect revival who appears to be wearing unaccustomed clothes. *Algy*, we are told, overdressed, but we are subtly and stubbornly convinced that his First Act heliotrope handkerchief was not quite so heliotrope as Mr. *RITCHARD* makes it appear, and that his Second Act yellow waistcoat was just a thought less brazenly yellow and just a shade less exposed. As a proper balance to this ebullience Mr. *GIELGUD* is more than ever grave—and "the graver the funnier" is the rule for *Jack Worthing*.

The ladies are blissfully beyond carp or cavil. Miss *EDITH EVANS* as *Lady Bracknell* adjusts her autocratic veil between autocratic pronouncements—Miss *FFRANGCON-DAVIES* as *Guendolen* puts up her parasol in the heat of the first interchange of iciness with *Cecily*—Miss *ASHCROFT* as *Cecily* sets down her watering-can to welcome urbane encroachments. In the perfect decorum of each characteristic gesture as it is executed we see a good actress being perfectly the mistress of her part. The *Miss Prism* this time is Miss *JEAN CADELL*, and never was there such a simpering piece of faded gentility. She gives unusual point to some of the lines so that we can re-appreciate their wit and once again realize how completely in character is

everything that the grotesquely self-righteous *Prism* has to utter. "A misanthrope I can understand—a womanthrope, never!" The line as Miss CADELL pours it out is *Prism* at her most prismatic. On the other hand—and one sets it down almost with relief among all this dazzling excellence—the new *Chasuble* of Mr. J. H. ROBERTS is merely dry. If the good Canon has no unctuousness about him he becomes a mere stick. Mr. ROBERTS we all know for a most intelligent and experienced actor. But the Canon's quality of unctuousness just does not exist in his voice. A. D.

Sandwiches

"T's a curious thing," said Sympson reflectively, "that Trade Union delegates always eat sardine sandwiches."

"Do they?" I replied. "Do you mean at every meal? Sardine sandwiches for breakfast, sardine sandwiches for lunch, sardine sandwiches for tea, sardine sandwiches for dinner . . ."

"Don't be ridiculous," said Sympson. "You have the sort of facetious mind that makes logical conversation impossible. I mean that when travelling by train Trade Union delegates always take sardine sandwiches with them. Last time I went on leave the train was packed tight with Trade Union delegates, and it happened that I had left my own packet of sandwiches on the platform at Preston. So naturally I popped into one compartment after another, looking as hungry as I could. Trade Union delegates, as you know, have hearts of pure gold, and in almost every compartment I was offered a sandwich. Sardine every time."

"Bad luck," I said sarcastically.

"It certainly became rather nauseating after the first dozen or so, but I persevered, hoping to get a cheese or even a tomato. Occasionally one strikes a tomato on the Great Western. But this time they were all sardines, and I have often wondered why."

"Possibly," I suggested, "the Government issue extra sardines to Trade Union delegates in the same way that they issue cheese to farm-labourers. Fish is supposed to be good for brains, you know."

"Perhaps that is the explanation," said Sympson, "though it is equally likely that it is a union rule. Or it may have some symbolic significance. Parsons, on the other hand, favour luncheon sausage. When I went to

Burnhaven to have my last inoculation I happened to leave my sandwiches on the platform at Crossley Junction, so I looked hungrily at a Dean and he gave me a luncheon-sausage sandwich. Expensive luncheon-sausage, the deep pink sort, but the bread was cut rather thin. There were several parsons on the train that day, and a few compartments farther along a young curate gave me another sandwich. The bread was cut thicker, of course, and the sausage was that mottled sort that tastes like old Roman pavements, but it was the same sandwich, in principle, as the Dean had."

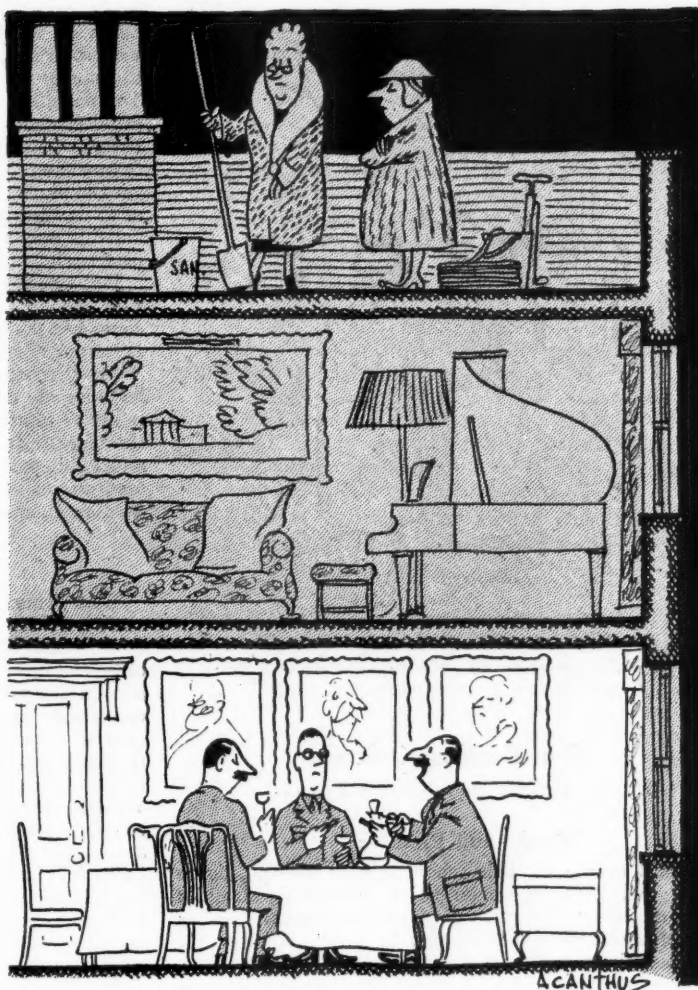
"Where did you leave your sandwiches to-day?" I asked.

Sympson laughed carelessly.

"How did you guess?" he asked. "I hope you didn't think I was hinting at anything. As a matter of fact I left my package on the platform at Derby. But the last thing I would dream of doing would be to impose upon the meagre rations of a brother officer."

A few minutes later, with his mouth full of my lunch, he was saying how queer it was that when Army officers travelled they always got cheese sandwiches.

"Cheese like inferior soap," he added, "for subalterns. And no doubt smuggled gorgonzola for brigadiers. And people talk about a democratic Army."



"Shall we join the ladies?"



"They'm going to make the Invasion Exercise very real."
 "Iss, I jyr there's to be real German troops in it."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Words and Pictures

THE best of the English School is in landscape, genre painting and portraits—open skies, farmlands, firesides and our ancestors. It was a good idea to illustrate essays on British social life and biography by British pictures. It would have been better still if for once the illustrations could have kept pace with the text, but the compilers are faced with the usual difficulties, as well as the glory, of full-page colour-prints, and so OSCAR WILDE faces a discussion of SHERIDAN and JOSEPH NASH's "Opening of the Great Exhibition" is opposite a page on the eighteenth-century coffee-house. It would be ungrateful to complain if *Britain in Pictures* (COLLINS, 4/6 each) was not emphatically a series of "bookman's books." They are got up to please the eye, and they do. There can be no criticism of the illustrations and the lay-out. The title-page doesn't say who is responsible, but the black-and-white, colour, spacing and print are faultlessly elegant. Here are two of these little books, GRAHAM GREENE's *British Dramatists* and ROSE MACAULAY's *Life Among the English*. The best you can do in a ten-thousand-word essay on an unwieldy subject is to flatter the readers by supposing they know something about it, be brilliant, and since you cannot be comprehensive, stick firmly to your personal prejudices. Both authors do this. As to prejudices, Mr. GREENE's of course are firmly of the nineteen-thirties (*Troilus and Cressida* is SHAKESPEARE's best play, *The Country Wife* is "perhaps the finest prose comedy in the language," and SHERIDAN is firmly put in his place), but none the less strong for that. He skims dazzlingly through the centuries, managing to do real

justice to ROBERTSON, GALSWORTHY and PINERO, to say something new, though probably not true, about SHAKESPEARE, to be condensed to the point of dehydration, and very witty. "Cigarette-cases were being offered, and very soon now butlers and parlourmaids would be crossing the stage, as the curtain rose, to answer the telephone. The panelling in the library looks quite Tudor, the club is lifted straight from St. James's—and now that acting has become a respectable profession the actors can be lifted from there too." Mr. GREENE's conclusion is that audiences get the plays they deserve, and the huge public indifference of to-day has bred the modern theatre. He argues it well, and his only serious omission is the vast influence of the film trade.

Perhaps it is not necessary to praise Miss MACAULAY's *Life Among the English*, for she has every quality which could be asked from an essayist, and the subject is her own preserve: that is confirmed from the opening sentence—"Owing to the weather, English social life must always have largely occurred either indoors, or when out of doors, in active motion"—down to her final description of life in the black-out. The book is bittersweet, alternately caustic and indulgent, and from all the fascinating letters, papers and diaries of each period she has chosen with sibylline wisdom exactly the right leaves.

P. M. K.

Yellow Peril

That *Ming Yellow* (HALE, 7/6) is an early effort by the author of *H. M. Pulham, Esquire*, goes without saying. Our Chinese allies are not depicted nowadays in the light of this admirable thriller. But the author's talent for telling a good story is more pronounced here than on his larger canvasses; and once you get going with the American quartet that sets out from Ting Fou to buy up Mandarin treasure, you are not likely to lose touch with it while it keeps in sight. This, of course, may not be for long. The quest is dangerous. Edwin Newall, the man of money, is out-distancing a fellow-competitor for Ming. He sticks at nothing. Mel, his daughter, as sporting as she is beautiful, backs up her father. Paul Steuben, her father's right hand, is an aspirant for Mel's, while Rodney Jones, newspaper man, is expert enough to command the expedition and ambitious enough to dream of ousting Steuben. Philip Liu, ambiguous Chinese product of an American college and nephew of a revolting—only too revolting—general, is their guide. He has only to get these simple people well up-country and things will happen. They do. No one gets short measure at Mr. JOHN P. MARQUAND's hands.

H. P. E.

Private and Confidential

SIR HENRY PONSONBY was for twenty-five years private secretary to QUEEN VICTORIA, and his "life from his letters" is now produced by his son, Lord PONSONBY of Shulbrede, in *Henry Ponsonby* (MACMILLAN, 21/-). Apart from his multifarious other duties—and he had a most exacting mistress—he acted as pipe of communication between her and her ministers, to say nothing of others, and, being thoroughly trusted at both ends, he must have known what was going on above and around him as much as any man living. His official correspondents became his friends and, as he had a gift of seeing them in the round and a happy turn for writing letters "pleasant to write and pleasant to read," he has left behind him an admirable chronicle of people and events of his time. The book can be "opened anywhere." It is never dull, and frequently amusing. He could even stand the devastating boredom of Balmoral without an audible squeal. Wars, politics, home

and foreign, affairs of Royalty, all bring out their personalities, and his sketches of character are often entertaining. "DIZZY," for instance (who wore rings outside his gloves), rejoicing in the "intervention of Providence" when a man succeeded to a peerage whom he wished to leave out of his government and otherwise might have had difficulty in ignoring; GLADSTONE, whom the Queen thought mad, walking and talking with equal vehemence; and a blistering comment in a letter to PONSONBY about the BISMARCKS and the then young Emperor—"They happen none of them to be English gentlemen, and we must take them as we find them—pure Prussians. Every German and Austrian knows what that means." But over all looms the figure of the Queen. Obstinate when in the wrong (as with her gillie and Indian attendant) and calmly self-confident in large affairs; rating her ministers soundly and knowing when to give way; dictatorial and inconsiderate to her household and somehow charming them not only to willing service but devotion; generally austere but unbending to talk of horses and take a couple of tickets in a Derby Sweep; and always working, always in the middle of things, there she is, supreme and indomitable. And in a chapter headed "The Queen and the Prince of Wales" her supposed narrowness in keeping the Prince out of things appears in a new light.

J. K.

Yeoman Service

As long ago as 1882 bright urban minds were proposing "agricultural and industrial armies under State control"; and HERBERT SPENCER—who provided, one imagines, the italics—wrote a far-sighted protest against surrendering one's liberty in return for a supposed enhancement of one's comfort. Mr. H. J. MASSINGHAM, equally averse to the surrender, is even more alive to the illusory and uncertain nature of the comfort. It all smacks, he feels, of the *Alice-in-Wonderland* procedure that takes the native goodness out of flour to put it dubiously back in synthetic form. But *Field Fellowship* (CHAPMAN AND HALL, 8/6) does far more than decry the unedifying present. This gallant little volume of essays, long and short, seeks first to preserve the fundamental good things of life—individual liberty, the genius for home-making, and a long view of the land—not only as a sacred charge but as a guarantee, in its personal possession and use, of individual and domestic freedom. A delightful text is eked out by delightful photographs: an Englishman sings the praises of his self-sufficient farm in Brittany, a land-girl amuses herself turning wooden bowls on a country lathe. And a constellation of kindred enthusiasts—from EVELYN to W. H. HUDSON—add lustre to both retrospect and prophecy.

H. P. E.

Chains

Even before the war the head of a German business firm confided to an American friend that he was subject to directions from three hundred and twenty-eight Government agencies and that to execute a single export order involved filling up one hundred and twenty different forms and permits. It was then agreed that the number of police regulations in force exceeded a quarter of a million. Most employers had given up the attempt to comply and simply kept a paid Nazi party official to buy a way through the tangle. This is the lighter side of a story that becomes darker when it is realized that the Nazis are now collecting from France alone as much capital payment every six months as they themselves surrendered in seven years under the Dawes and Young reparation plans, while making the world ring with their protests. Financial troubles, however, are a small part of all that is suffered even in

Germany by *People Under Hitler* (LINDSAY DRUMMOND, 12/6), as soberly related by Mr. WALLACE DEUEL. "With the victory of National Socialism the play of free forces introduced by democracy came to an end"—ADOLF himself has declared it. There is now no such thing as truth for truth's sake, since history, art, religion, athletics, love and marriage, even astronomy, must conform to and subserve the Nazi creed—individual taste and judgment being no longer permitted. Such weaknesses must not only be suppressed in the German of to-day, they must be bred out of existence in the German of to-morrow, and to this end sterilization or the lethal chamber are the means, on the arbitrary decision of party nominees not uninfluenced by monetary or other irrelevant considerations. In return for these personal degradations Germans are offered a share in a suppositional collective triumph of a blonde Nordic race, whose numbers are swelled inside the Fatherland by the wholesale use of peroxide and abroad by the official inclusion of the Japanese and—temporarily at any rate—of the Turks. Mr. DEUEL has told the whole story yet again. It cannot be set forth too often. No wonder that such honest Germans as are left are praying to God and the Allies to break their bonds.

C. C. P.

An East Anglian Shoot

His Prey Was Man (JENKINS, 7/6) opens on a handsome gamekeeper bullying his elderly master's lovely young wife. Not, however, a forgotten fragment from D. H. LAWRENCE, it is a rural melodrama by Mr. ARTHUR GASK, in which blackmail is the springboard for murder. The lovely young wife, having little to be ashamed of, makes a mistake in not immediately confessing it to her husband, as you will agree when I tell you of *Colonel Hilary* that "Not a few times in his life had it been said of him that he looked every inch a soldier and a gentleman"; men looking like that are infinitely sympathetic. The upshot is not merely one murder but several which keep *Gilbert Larose*, ex-star of the C.I.D., busy in his extremely unprofessional way. Mr. GASK has a sense of plot which does not often desert him, but his book is rather loosely written. And since when has a barrister given his name to a legal firm or champagne been put up in quart bottles (pp. 129 and 96)?

E. O. D. K.



S. 1465

"Merely say I'm from the Citizens' Advice Bureau."

Saluting As It Shouldn't

IV

HERE, continuing our analysis, are some more forms of Saluting As It Shouldn't.

THE SALUTE FROM AMBUSH

A Flight-Lieutenant, say, is walking along the Strand with his best girl. He is smoking, talking to her, carrying a parcel—or rather six recently-purchased pairs of socks folded in an innocent newspaper—and the girl has just asked him to hold her bag for a moment while she adjusts her hat. At this point two R.A.F. military policemen lurking in a doorway spot what is going on. Military police being very punctilious in saluting etiquette—they darn well have to be!—they suddenly click their heels like pistol shots and salute in a manner that would strike even Royalty as being slightly overdone. The wretched officer, thus assailed from ambush, tries to clear for action: for he has to get both hands empty, one to remove his cigarette and the other to acknowledge the salute.

Well, the general effect, of course, is of a man shot through the heart, and for several minutes afterwards the pavement is littered with socks, newspapers, cigarettes, and all those things girls have in their bags. The military police ignore the whole situation. They just gaze blankly into space—waiting for the next victim.

THE SALUTE INSUBORDINATE

At first this seems a contradiction,

but it isn't really. There are, in fact, several kinds of Salute Insubordinate. Here is one.

Second-Lieutenant Swordfrog, soon after joining the battalion, sees fit to tell off Company-Sergeant-Major Magazine, one of those old-time C.S.M.s with *yeeeeeers* of experience behind him. When he finishes, faltering towards the end, for it dawns on him he is making a major social *gaffe*, Magazine says, "Very good, sir," in a controlled sort of voice rather like the casing of a hand-grenade, steps back a pace and salutes punctiliously and smartly. It will, however, be a Salute Insubordinate; but Swordfrog can't put a finger on just why, for has not C.S.M. Magazine had *yeeeeeers* of experience? Nevertheless the slightly exaggerated smartness, the offensive quiver of the hand, the glassy stare over Swordfrog's right shoulder, and the perceptible movement of the lips constitute something that, tried on Lieutenant-Colonel Howitzer, would result in Magazine having to hew his way up from Corporal once more. He doesn't actually spit on the ground—but the impressionable Swordfrog probably looks to see if he has, and for the next week goes to incredible lengths to avoid meeting C.S.M. Magazine; or if he does he acknowledges the salute so fulsomely that it might have been given by a lovely blonde A.T.S. But the day comes at last when C.S.M. Magazine lets it drop and salutes quite normally.

Another single-pipper has learned his lesson.

At the other end of the scale comes quite a different type of Salute Insubordinate—and one which this time has its dangers for the saluter. Here's an example.

Sergeant-Pilot Flashhalf has just gone straight from airman to sergeant—and the promotion has gone equally straight to his head. He is a Knight of the Sky, an intrepid bird-man; he wears his flying-helmet and a four-foot scarf into the local; he has had his photo taken in full kit from a position apparently six inches above ground level.

By way of cutting out all useless dead wood, he gives up saluting any of the unwinged groundlings, except when it is forced upon him, and then he gives a careless superior sort of flick that would be considered offensive even as an acknowledgment by General Wavell to a half-drunk private. He tries this, however, once too often when he deals one out in Whitehall to Flight-Lieutenant Trenchrayde, who has no wings but several decorations gained in the infantry in the last war at a considerably closer range to the enemy than Flashhalf is ever likely to be in his whole life. As Sergeant Flashhalf passes on, Flight-Lieutenant Trenchrayde yells "Oi! You!" in a voice which used to bring his men over the top like springs coming out of a broken-down sofa. Flashhalf stops as though lassoed round the neck. "Cummere!" bawls Trenchrayde. Flashhalf returns as if under hypnotic influence. "Don't-you-know-how-to-salute-an-officer? Weren't-you-ever-taught-to-salute? I-don't-give-a-damn-if-you-don't-salute-me-at-all, but-by-Judas-if-you-do-you're-going-to-do-it-right-and-not-like-a-ruddy-errand-boy-waving-to-a-housemaid..."

Well, that's only the politely conversational opening of what the elderly Flight-Lieutenant has to say about saluting—a subject, however, he soon leaves in favour of a brief résumé of Flashhalf's career, appearance and habits, followed by a few recommendations for his immediate future actions, most of them impossible to attempt with any prospect of success. Blushing and stammering, and with his once pleasantly heavy chevrons feeling they might now float off into thin air any minute, Sergeant Flashhalf at last is allowed to retire. As far as an acknowledgment of his salute goes, he has had it.



"I made them nine inches long in accordance with the new regulations."

Letters to a Conscript Father

MY DEAR FATHER,—I don't quite know how to tell you what I've got to tell you, so I think I'd better just yell the glorious fact in the simplest terms.

I've got my tapes!

Whatdja think of that? I await your telegram of congratulation first thing to-morrow morning, addressed, please, to *Corporal P. Padgate*. I could hardly believe it at the time, and even now, when I've been three days an N.C.O., it startles me to be called "Corporal." I have to look round to see who's being spoken to. Naturally, this has taken the wind out of Bairstow's sails. He cheesed me utterly when he got his own tapes last week, the way he kept binding about discipline and morale—and taking in the Corporals' Club on any of our strolls round the Camp, so that he could say, "Well, I'm going in here," and leave me standing outside. Anyway, I've found out now that the famous Corporals' Club is only a sort of glorified N.A.A.F.I., and not very much glorified at that. You can hear people lambasting the piano in the Airmen's N.A.A.F.I. adjoining, and sometimes somebody wheezing away on a piano-accordion. The only way to dodge the racket is to turn the radio on full strength and take a chair close up to it.

Still, it's only right that we should have somewhere apart from the erks. They swarm all over the rest of the darned camp.

Bairstow and I are really quite friendly again now. We've had several quite serious talks together about the best way of handling our men—Bairstow speaking rather grandly, I must say, after only being a corporal (and "acting," at that—still, so am I) for just over a week—and had a practice the other night at some of the well-established N.C.O.'s stock discipline phrases, trying to shake each other.

Bairstow would stand three paces from me and yell out, "Call yourself a man? You look more like a bundle of dirty washing! Stand up, can't you!"—and so on. Then, if I managed to take a fair amount of this without flinching, it would be my turn to yell at him. I made him flinch twice; once by calling him a "silly big girl," and again by kicking his toes the right distance apart when he was supposed to be standing at attention.

We also had "inspection." I found



"The bride wore a smart two-piece suit in crushed olive, and a half-deerstalker with monogram brooch . . ."

more things wrong with Bairstow than he found wrong with me; that means that I won all along the line, so I gave myself marks for (a) Observation and (b) Smartness. These were the things I found wrong with Bairstow:

Front

Button upside-down.
Belt-buckle out of centre.
Field-dressing not in pocket.
Piece of fluff on hat.
Boots not laced right up.

Back

Hairs on jacket collar.
Haircut needed.

Belt twisted in middle.
Handkerchief sticking out of pocket.
Trousers bottoms frayed.
Heels worn down.

General

Leaning back and a bit on one side.

He could find so little wrong with me that he wanted to count one of my ears being higher than the other. But I said that if he did I should count his having soap on his neck and marking-ink showing through his collar.

Naturally, it doesn't matter what we look like now—that is to say, we shan't be included in inspections. We

shall be there, of course, to hiss, "Keep still, that man, Number 7 in the centre rank!" and to take names and numbers in our notebooks, but inspecting officers will just sweep past without bothering to see whether our buttons have been done. Although that doesn't mean that we must get slack and disgusting like Bairstow. Still, it's up to us to know what to look for, because we shall carry out inspections of our own men from time to time, and it's no good letting them think they can get away with anything. We are both looking forward most to inspecting a detachment wearing webbing, because that offers the widest possible field for detecting irregularities.

One thing we're both a bit apprehensive about is taking a Flight for drill on the Square. You know, so there's no point in concealing it from you, that both Bairstow and I had ingenious systems for keeping off the parade-ground when we were mere A.C.s (but please don't repeat this to anybody, in case it should get back to this Station)—and now, of course, we're going to have trouble over giving our orders. The only way Corporals learn how to drill men is by being drilled themselves before they get to be Corporals, so we are somewhat inexperienced. We know some of the words of command, of course, and we have both been frantically casting around for a style of our own. The main thing is to make the commands sound as unlike the actual words as you can. Even the old "Left, right," needs to be cast into some individualistic form if you're to

get any results. If an N.C.O. just called out "Left, right, left right," in perfect English like that, the whole Flight would become a confused rabble, thinking they were getting some entirely unfamiliar order. Bairstow hit on quite a good form, I think. It's difficult to put these things phonetically, but it's something like, "Heem! Loy! Heem! Loy!" I began to work on one almost entirely without consonants, and think it may come to something. It goes, "Aaeiii! Oiee! Aaeiii! Oiee!" It isn't perfected yet, though, because I experimented with it on a fatigue party, and they all marked time. Then, of course, I couldn't think how to start them moving again. Fortunately, a motor transport came out from Married Quarters very fast and they all scattered without being ordered to do so. After I'd torn them off a fierce strip for not waiting for my command I fell them in again and didn't try any more fancy business.

Still, I expect all this isn't of very much interest to you, Dad—not from the point of view of teaching you how to keep out of trouble in the R.A.F. One thing, though, it will be an encouragement to you to keep smart and airmanlike, knowing the sort of things we N.C.O.s are constantly on the watch for.

Dash, I'm afraid my excitement has rather carried me away; I'd quite forgotten that the idea of my being a corporal might be something of a bitter pill for you, still being an A.C.2. Never mind, Dad—it may be some sort

of consolation to be able to tell your fellow-erks that you have a son who is an N.C.O. No, I'm not shooting a line. When I was at school and we had "Padgate's Perfect Peas" at meals I sometimes used to mention casually that you were the "Padgate." You've no idea what an impression it created.

I must stop. I'm really supervising fatigues, but I've appointed the toughest-looking janker-wallah as my deputy, and told him I shall charge him if there's anything wrong, so the thing is more or less running itself. Still, I must have a look round, because if anything is wrong I shall be charged too, even though I am an N.C.O.

Your loving Son PETER.

P.S.—I must write and tell Mother, though it won't be as much fun as telling you. She thinks Air-Commodores are just small fry. I'm having some photographs taken (side view). I'll let you have one to show round.

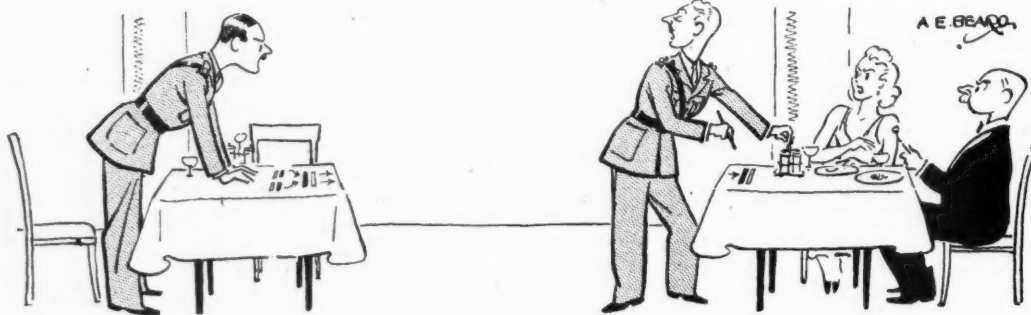
Clarification

"OMISSION.—In the report last week of the wedding of Mr. John Heath and Miss Claudine Tizzard, it should have been stated that the bridegroom was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Heath."—*Provincial Paper*.

"MATRIMONY.—Gentleman (39), would like to meet Refined Lady, who is reluctant to seek this means of introduction."

Scotsman.

But not too reluctant.



"Of course, once we cross over and establish a bridgehead . . ."

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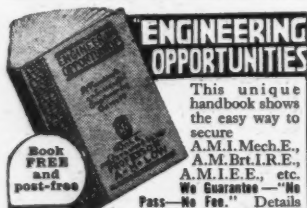
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